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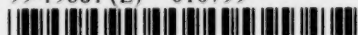
Rapporteur: Mr. Juichi **Takahara** (Japan)

**Proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000–2001
(item 4 (b))****Section 27. Administrative services**

1. At its 32nd meeting, on 24 June 1999, the Committee for Programme and Coordination considered section 27, Administrative services, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000–2001 (A/54/6 (Sect. 27)). It had before it the proposed programme budget in respect of subsections 27A, Office of the Under-Secretary-General for Management; 27B, Office of Programme Planning, Budget and Accounts; 27C, Office of Human Resources Management; 27D, Office of Central Support Services; 27E, Administration, Geneva; 27F, Administration, Vienna; and 27G, Administration, Nairobi.

2. The representative of the Secretary-General introduced the budget section and responded to queries raised during the Committee's consideration of the document, indicating that the Department of Management would continue the implementation of the Secretary-General's reform of the management of the United Nations. Furthermore, he indicated that the focus of the work for the next biennium would be on strengthening of management, periodic financial reporting and performance monitoring functions. High priority would be given to the effective and coherent exercise of management functions, the establishment and maintenance of clear lines of responsibility and accountability and enhancement of the responsiveness of the Secretariat to the changing and growing needs of the Organization.

3. The attention of the Committee was drawn to the diversity of work of the Department of Management, activities of which included the management of financial resources, human resources and support operations. Those services provided the backbone for the efficient



and effective functioning of the work of the Organization, and efficient administrative services paved the way for the useful and timely delivery of outputs and services to Member States. It was indicated that efficiency measures would continue to be undertaken to streamline functions, simplify processes and procedures and modernize services, especially through expanded use of information technology. Furthermore, the Secretariat would continue the progressive investment in training of staff and development of substantive skills, as well as its efforts to provide for a secure and safe working environment.

Discussion

4. Support was expressed for the proposed programme of work of the Department of Management and the level and allocation of resources proposed for the biennium 2000–2001 under section 27. The view was expressed that the Department of Management was playing an important role in the implementation of resolutions 52/12 A and B of 12 November and 19 December 1997 and 52/220 of 22 December 1997, streamlining the organizational structure of the Secretariat, strengthening the accountability of programme managers and staff and increasing the efficiency of the Secretariat. Support was also expressed for the efforts by the Department to identify efficiency savings to be reallocated for economic and social development through the Development Account. Appreciation was expressed to the secretariats of the Committee and the Fifth Committee and the staff of the Department of Management for their services and the assistance provided to both Committees.

5. The view was expressed that the format of section 27 of the proposed programme budget should be harmonized with that of other budget sections.

6. With regard to section 27A, Office of the Under-Secretary-General for Management, the view was expressed that the programme narrative should have spelt out more clearly the measures taken to implement resolution 53/207 of 18 December 1998, in particular with respect to the responsibilities of the secretariat of the Committee for Programme and Coordination for the timely submission of documentation. The view was expressed that the General Assembly should consider, at its fifty-fourth session, the issue of all additional human and other resources required to strengthen the secretariat of the Committee, taking into account its increasing workload and responsibilities, in accordance with paragraphs 356 and 369 of part one of its report.¹

7. The view was expressed that there was a lack of justification and evidence regarding the increase in the workload and responsibilities of the secretariat of the Committee for Programme and Coordination.

8. With regard to section 27C, Office of Human Resources Management, support was expressed for the proposed programme of work and level of resources, in particular under training programmes. However, it was indicated that training should be job-related, and, in this regard, it was suggested to replace the notion of continuous learning with upgrading of job-related skills. The importance of comprehensive evaluation of all training programmes, as had been recommended by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, was stressed. Efforts made to ensure that consultants and experts did not replace staff members were noted. It was stressed that the Office of Human Resources Management should be more active in recruitment of staff from unrepresented and under-represented countries and in resolving geographical and gender imbalances in the Secretariat, in particular with regard to high-level posts. It was stressed that emphasis should be placed on staff mobility, as well as security and safety of staff in the field. With regard to the reform of the Office of Human Resources Management, the view was expressed that delegation of authority should be accompanied by a system of control and accountability. The view was expressed that section 27C still needed more improvement from the point of view of

concise and focused descriptions of activities and objectives to be implemented. It was stated with concern that the introduction to section 27C did not fully reflect the relevant programme of the medium-term plan. Concern was expressed about the appropriateness of reference in the programme narrative to the activities of a Task Force for Human Resources Management Reform, as it had no General Assembly mandate, although the view was also expressed that this was within the purview of the Secretary-General. Concern was also expressed regarding the provision of paragraph 22 of section V of Assembly resolution 53/221 of 7 April 1999. The view was expressed that General Service staff of all nationalities must be given equal opportunities to be promoted to the Professional category through the G-to-P examinations, and that the Assembly should keep this issue under review.

9. With regard to section 27D, Office of Common Support Services, the view was expressed that more concerted efforts should be pursued to expand further the common services arrangements with the United Nations funds and programmes and with the other organizations of the United Nations system, including such services in other United Nations locations. The view was expressed that the process of technological transformation of the Organization should be constantly coordinated in all locations, as well as with Member States, in order to avoid possible disruption of the intergovernmental processes owing to rapidly changing working methods and procedures resulting from technological innovations.

10. With regard to section 27G, Administration, Nairobi, while the proposals for reorganization and strengthening of that duty station in response to resolution 52/220 were commended, the view was expressed that full coordination of such efforts with the governing bodies of the United Nations Environment Programme and the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) was advisable to avoid any negative impact on programme implementation. The view was expressed that the United Nations Office at Nairobi should be treated on a par with other United Nations offices, such as those at Geneva and Vienna, and should be provided with full conference services.

11. The view was also expressed that the current level of General Service staff should be reviewed in view of various measures taken to reduce the workload.

12. With regard to the inclusion in the proposed programme budget of recommendations of the Office of Internal Oversight Services, concern was expressed that those recommendations had not yet been reviewed by the General Assembly. The view was also expressed that the inclusion of those recommendations was in full compliance with decisions of the Assembly.

13. The view was expressed that the Committee for Programme and Coordination should limit the time given to the consideration of this section as it was not a substantive programme.

Conclusions and recommendations

14. The Committee emphasized that the responsibilities and workload of the secretariat of the Committee for Programme and Coordination, which also serves as the secretariat of the Fifth Committee, should have been clearly spelled out in the programme narrative, in accordance with paragraphs 356 and 369 of part one of its report.¹

15. The Committee recommended that the General Assembly continue consideration of this issue in its fifty-fourth session, in accordance with paragraphs 8 and 9 of section III of its resolution 52/220.

16. The Committee recommended to the General Assembly that it request the Secretary-General to reformulate the narrative of section 27C in accordance with its resolution 53/221. The revised narrative should be submitted to the Assembly for consideration at its fifty-fourth session.

17. The Committee recommended that future programme narratives proposed under section 27 should better reflect the accomplishments to be achieved, in accordance with the Regulations and Rules Governing Programme Planning, the Programme Aspects of the Budget, the Monitoring of Implementation and the Methods of Evaluation.

18. The Committee decided to recommend to the General Assembly approval of the programme narrative of sections 27A, B, D, E, F and G, Administrative services, subject to the following modification in paragraph 27A.27 (d) (iii): reference should be included to the reports of the Joint Inspection Unit.

Notes

¹ *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-third Session (A/53/16).*
